

# EXHIBIT A

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## Greenies dog treat lawsuit settled

By DAVID TWIDDY

KANSAS CITY, MO.

The makers of Greenies, one of the nation's best-selling dog treats, have settled a class-action lawsuit claiming the teeth-cleaning product injured or killed close to a dozen dogs.

U.S. District Judge Gary Fenner on Monday agreed with a joint request to dismiss the case.

Alan Sash, who represented 10 dog owners against Kansas City-based manufacturer S&M NuTec, said the case was settled but the terms were confidential.

An attorney for S&M NuTec, which was acquired last year by McLean, Va.-based candy conglomerate Mars Inc., also declined further comment.

"All issues between the parties have been resolved," said Laura Fey.

Greenies are hard, dark green treats shaped like a bone on one end and a toothbrush on the other. Designed to scrub dogs' teeth while being chewed, the treats have become extremely popular in recent years, with pet owners snapping up more than 300 million a year.

But beginning in 2005, media outlets began carrying stories of pet owners claiming their dogs either choked on pieces of Greenies or suffered medical problems when undigested pieces became trapped in their intestines. A CNN report last year estimated at least 13 dogs had died of Greenies-related problems.

In their lawsuit, Sash's clients claimed S&M NuTec, the company that invented the treats, knew of the dangers Greenies posed for dogs but refused to adequately warn consumers or pull the treats from the shelves.

The company repeatedly said Greenies were safe when used as directed, which included buying dogs the correct size of treat and making sure the animal adequately chewed it and didn't gulp it down.

Still, the company changed the packaging of Greenies to make its warnings more visible and came out with a new formula late last year that it said was more digestible and designed to break down into smaller pieces during chewing.

On the Net:

Greenies: <http://www.greenies.com>

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